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INFIDELITY *and* INFIDELS

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Infidelity and Infidels

"When men from custom or fashion pretend to believe what they do not believe, they unship the helm of their morality, and being no longer honest to their own minds, they feel no moral difficulty in being unjust to others. Infidelity does not consist in believing or disbelieving, it consists in professing to believe what one does not believe. It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind, as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime."—*Thos. Paine.*

"In proportion as a man suppresses his conviction to save his orthodoxy from suspicion, or distorts language from its common use that he may stand well with his party; in that proportion he clouds and degrades his intellect, as well as undermines the integrity of his character."—*W. E. Channing.*

A few weeks ago a gentleman who sometimes attends services here was asked why he did not unite with this society, and he replied that he did not care to belong to a society of infidels, although he enjoyed going to hear an infidel lecture occasionally. Another young man on his way to service here one Sunday morning was asked where he was going. He replied, "To the Clemmer Theater to hear Mr. Dietrich," and he was told "Why don't you go down to the library and get some infidel books and read them—the result will be the same." Not long ago the Rev. John Snape of the First Baptist Church delivered a series of Sunday evening sermons in an attempt to disprove some of the fundamental doctrines of this society, and in a display advertisement in

the newspapers each Saturday evening and Sunday morning, he ran a footnote, saying: "It is needless to add that these sermons are in reply to certain infidel lectures being delivered on Sunday mornings at the Clemmer Theater." These are only several out of a great number of instances in which reference has been made to me as an infidel, and the natural inference is that you who support my teaching and believe in it form a society of infidels. Evidently our so-called infidelity here at the Clemmer Theater is beginning to worry the orthodox people. It is one of the triumphs of our movement here that we have wedged our way into the pulpits of the orthodox church, and forced the preachers to take note of what we are doing. So long as we were a little struggling society they ignored us; but now we have grown to such proportions that we are constantly intruding upon their work and interfering with their progress, so that they feel the necessity now and then of doing what they can to counteract our influence. Not knowing how to do this in any other way, they resort to feverish denunciation, and call us names such as infidels, heretics, agnostics, atheists, all of which are intended to be epithets of opprobrium. The intention is to accuse us of a kind of moral depravity, and thank goodness modern civilization saves us from worse treatment. Only a little while ago, to be an infidel was to be a social outcast. A little while before that to be an infidel was to be persecuted. And still a little earlier to be an infidel was to be an outlaw, subject to the penalty of death. Now to be an infidel means only to be looked upon with suspicion by the ignorant and superstitious, while to those who think, to be an infidel is almost a human obligation. It is the label of those who have thrown off the restrictions of herd-suggestion, which controls the thought and dominates the action of the majority of men. To us who know something of the history of the world and of religions as well as something of the psychology of herd-suggestion, orthodoxy and conform-

ity are the terms of opprobrium, while infidelity and heresy are badges of honor.

Nevertheless since the term is applied to us, since it is intended to carry with it a vicious meaning, and since we are supposed to shudder and be scared when it is hurled at us, it might be well for us to inquire into its meaning, and learn whether or not it really does mean what these people intend it should mean when they use it. With this idea in mind I went to several dictionaries to look up the definition of the term infidel, and I found that each dictionary gives a different meaning of the word. Now not knowing which dictionary is used by the various people who apply this term to us, I shall have to treat the different definitions in order to learn whether or not the name infidel is appropriate to us, and if not appropriate to us, to whom it is appropriate.

Each an Infidel to the Other

Upon going to one of the dictionaries I found that the word infidel means one who does not believe in the distinctive doctrines of a particular religion, while perhaps an adherent of some other religion; that is, an infidel is one who does not believe in someone's else religion. He may have a religion of his own and may believe heartily in it, but that is not enough. He must believe in the distinctive doctrines of a particular religion. Now according to this definition we are infidels, but so is everybody else. This definition makes Mohammet an infidel because he did not believe in the religion of Martin Luther, and it makes Martin Luther an infidel because he did not believe in the religion of Mohammet. It makes Jesus an infidel because he did not believe in the religion of the Pharisees, and the Pharisees infidels because they did not believe in the religion of Jesus. Mr. Ingersoll was an infidel because he did not accept the religion of Mr. Moody, and Mr. Moody was an infidel because he did not accept the re-

ligion of Mr. Ingersoll. I am an infidel because I do not accept the religion of the Rev. Mr. Snape, and the Rev. Mr. Snape is an infidel because he does not accept my religion. There is neither sense nor reason in an argument of this kind. The early Christians were called atheists because they refused to believe in the pagan gods, and the Christians called the pagans atheists because they would not believe in the Christian gods. You have no doubt read of the death of that good old Christian father, Polycarp, who was put to death as an atheist in the second century. As he stood in the amphitheater at Smyrna, the multitude crying out against him took pity upon his old age, and begged him to pronounce the formulas which expressed adherence to the popular religion. They said, "Only cry 'Away with the atheists' and your life will be spared." Whereupon, Polycarp, looking around with a nervous countenance upon the clamorers, pointed to them with his hand, and with a groan and casting up his eyes to heaven, cried, "Away with the atheists." It may readily be seen that this definition does not lead us anywhere. Would it be just to call me an infidel because I do not believe in the teachings of Buddhism? I have never professed to be a Buddhist, that is not my religion. Is it any more just to call me an infidel because I do not believe the teachings of the Baptist church? I have never pretended to be a Baptist, that is not my religion. When a European comes to this country, we speak of him as a foreigner but he is not a foreigner in his own country, and so according to this definition, a Buddhist is an infidel in this country, although he be very orthodox in India, and of course a Christian is an infidel in India even though he be an archbishop in America. All the great religions of the world seem to use this definition of infidelity. The Mohammedan goes out with sword in hand to slay the Christian infidel, and the Christian with torch and fagot in hand to burn the Mohammedan infidel. Each religion thus makes an infidel of the other.

Men Dislike Difference

The use of the term infidel according to this definition is the result of the dislike men have for difference. Men do not like others to differ from them, they love uniformity. This is true not only of men, but of lower animals. The herd will ostracise the individual which differs materially from the commonly accepted customs of the herd. Among men, difference has always been regarded as dissent in the individual; in the state, it is held synonymous with rebellion and revolution and anarchy; in the church, it is considered schism, heresy, infidelity, atheism. The man who differs from us is always disagreeable, and one of the most difficult things for us to recognize is that the other man has a right to be different. This is well brought out in that almost witty saying of Bishop Warburton when he showed the meaning of orthodoxy and heterodoxy by the actual translation of the Greek words from which they are derived. He said "Orthodoxy is my doxy and heterodoxy is the other man's doxy." And that is what they really mean. I am always orthodox and the man who differs from me is a heretic. The church sets up a standard of doctrines and says that all who differ from these are infidels, but do you not see that the man who differs, regards all those who subscribe to the doctrines as infidels? The only reason the doctrines of the orthodox church have prevailed, and we are infidels, is because they have the majority on their side. If we were in the majority, they would be the infidels. We cannot stand this difference in other people because it is a form of criticism, it puts us instinctively on the defensive. We regard all people who differ from us as queer. It was this which led the good old Quaker woman to say to her husband, "All are queer, John, but thee and me, and sometimes I think thee is a little queer." Human nature resents the appearance of queer people. In the early days of Christianity the Christians were persecuted because they were different from other people,

and when Christianity became the prevailing religion it persecuted the other people because they were different from it. But this fact of difference is inevitable and beneficent. That is why we Unitarians do not call other people infidels in this sense. We accept the difference and rejoice. Darwin demonstrated its purpose in science some years ago, maintaining that all progress has been made by variation; here a difference and there a difference until the whole of the old order changes, giving place to a new order, the old difference becoming the new uniformity, and then another difference beckoning us on. And this is just as true in religion, a difference here and a difference there until the old order changes, the differences of the one generation becoming the new uniformity of the next, the infidelity of the one century becoming the orthodoxy of the next. Infidelity for which men used to be burned alive is now openly accepted by the church. There is scarcely a preacher living, no matter how orthodox he be, who would not have been burned at the stake three centuries ago for teaching what he now does. Yet they call a man an infidel for being a century in advance of them. History has taught them nothing. If the infidelity of yesterday is the orthodox religion of today, is it not possible that the infidelity of today will be the orthodox religion of tomorrow? And for the sake of human progress, let us hope that tomorrow in turn will have its infidels, blazing the trail for another day's march.

Morality Must Be Labeled

But I went to another dictionary and found that an infidel is one who refuses to accept what is manifestly true; and using this definition the Christian calls him an infidel who rejects Christianity because he claims Christianity is manifestly true. But every other religion makes the same claim. Every religion in the world claims to be manifestly true and infallible. Therefore if the Protestant minister refuses to believe in the manifestly true

Christian Science, why not grant the same privilege to a man who refuses to accept the manifestly true Protestant interpretation of Christianity. The Rev. Mr. Snape denies me the right of rejecting his religion, but he exercises the right of rejecting mine. Is that just? He will not believe in my religion, but because I do not believe in his he labels me an infidel. Now if I were to call Mr. Snape an infidel because he does not accept my doctrines, he would laugh at my assumption; but when he points to me and shouts "Infidel," I am supposed to shudder and be afraid. Well, I only laugh too. But the trouble with this definition is that it makes that which is a virtue in a Baptist become a vice in a Unitarian.

Now such discrimination leads one to suppose that what these people are interested in is not religion, but the Christian religion; not morality, but Christian morality; not honesty, sincerity, loyalty, but Christian honesty, Christian sincerity, Christian loyalty; not the human virtues, but the sectarian virtues. They will not recognize morality unless it is labelled. Every now and then we see a letter in the Forum of our morning paper insisting that the bible be introduced into our public schools, because they say it is a shame that our boys and girls are not taught morality. The inference is that the only book of genuine morality in the world is the bible. They do not seem to realize that some of the worst morality in all the literature of the world is to be found in the bible, and that practically all the good morality which is to be found in the bible may be parallelled in the precepts of the great ethical teachers of all peoples. Of course our children should be taught morality; but why not let them learn their morality from real moral teachers like Plato and Emerson, Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus, Socrates and Carlyle, Goethe and Abraham Lincoln? These teachers do not disturb the public peace; they have caused no blood to be shed; they do not spread intolerance; they do not teach fear

and damnation; why can not our children learn morality from these? Because it is not Christian morality. The thing these people want introduced into the schools is not morality at all, it is Christian orthodoxy. To these people no morality, no matter how fine, is worth anything unless it be labelled with the Christian tag.

Do We Believe Anything?

I went to another dictionary and I found that an infidel is a disbeliever; that is, one who does not believe in anything, not even the wrong things. Accordingly to escape the stigma of this epithet one must be a believer in something, no matter what. This may be the definition these people have in mind when they apply the term to us, for it is constantly being said that we do not believe anything. They are not interested in the truth or falsity of our belief so much as in whether or not we have a belief. Surely I need not spend much time upon this phase of our subject. You published one of my addresses a few weeks ago, entitled "Substitutes for the Old Beliefs," in which I compared the beliefs of the orthodox church with ours, and I feel sure the advantage was in our favor. Let me merely mention a few of the things spoken of there. We both believe in a basis of authority. Their basis of authority is the church and the bible, ours is the reason and the conscience. As we look back over the history of the world we find that theirs is not an authority at all and has failed in every instance; while on the other hand we find that ours has been the trusted authority in every department of life, and may also be trusted in matters of religion and morality. We both believe in a universe. Their universe is a little tiny playhouse affair, operated in a mechanical way like a toy engine; ours is infinite in its reach and grandeur. We both believe that this world came from somewhere and from something. They believe it was created outright by a creator, we believe that it grew into its present form by a slow and gradual

process from very simple things. There is no evidence whatever for their view. There is every proof in the world for ours. No one has ever yet seen an act of creation, while we see the process of growth going on about us all the time. We both believe in some unknown force or energy which is the cause of this growth. They think they know what it is and try to define it in terms absolutely unworthy the thought of an intelligent person. We may not be able to define it, but we know that it is not what they say it is, and that it is infinitely more. We admit that we are agnostics and know that they too are agnostics even though they do not admit it, because they can know no more about it than do we. We both believe in man. They believe in a fallen and perverted man, one who is prone to all evil and drifting toward destruction. We believe in a rising man who is struggling after good, who is today infinitely better than he was ages ago, and who is responsible for all the things which make up our modern civilization. They believe in a book, we believe in thousands of books, why should the man who believes in one book call him who believes in thousands of books an infidel? They believe in a saviour, and we believe in a thousand saviours. They believe in the next world, we believe in this world. They believe in Abraham and Isaac and Moses and Peter and Paul; so do we, but we also believe in Socrates and Seneca and Darwin and Spencer and a host of others. They believe in Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a divine mother, and call her the madonna; we believe that every woman who has gone down into the shadow to give the world a new life is a divine mother, a madonna. And so I might continue, but this is enough to show you that the accusation that we do not believe anything is not true, and that according to this definition we cannot be called infidels.

Must Believe the Unbelievable

But I went to still another dictionary and I found

that an infidel is one who disbelieves in divine revelation, who rejects the supernatural; that is, one who refuses to believe in the unbelievable, who is unable to believe those things which are incapable of demonstration. For instance, I believe in the things whose existence has been demonstrated by science, but I do not feel obliged to believe in those things whose existence can not be demonstrated, so I am called an infidel. To give you an illustration, I believe in the law of gravitation, because I can prove this law. I stand on the scales with my overcoat on; then I weigh myself without the overcoat, and the difference in weight is the pull of gravitation. On the other hand, I do not believe in ghosts, for the simple reason that the existence of ghosts has not been scientifically established. Likewise I believe in those historical events the evidence for which is conclusive, but I reject those, the evidence for which is insufficient and unsatisfactory. To illustrate, I believe that Napoleon was defeated by the allied forces on the field of Waterloo because the evidence is of such a nature that an intelligent person cannot doubt it, but I refuse to believe in the resurrection of the body of Jesus because the evidence is so insufficient and so unsatisfactory that no intelligent person can believe it. Again, I believe in the unwavering certainty of the action of universal law because I see it act in this way every day, but if I wish to escape the name infidel I must believe in something which contradicts law. I must believe in miracles; but I have never seen a miracle, in fact I have never seen a person who has seen a miracle. I have only read about miracles, and usually in very untrustworthy books. I believe in cause and effect, that every deed a man does carries with it its natural consequence; but in order to avoid being called an infidel I must believe that by means of holding up his hand for Jesus or of partaking of a little bread and wine over which some formula has been mumbled, a man can escape the result of his wrong doing; that by means of conversion even on a death bed

a man may in the twinkling of an eye be transformed from a brute into an angel and receive eternal rewards for his crimes. According to this definition a man is an infidel if he will not believe the things which are contrary to the natural order. If one can say with Tertullian "I believe what seems impossible to the reason," then he is not an infidel.

The Real Infidel

There is still another definition which is to be found in all the dictionaries. According to this, infidelity means unfaithfulness to a trust or vow or obligation, disloyalty, dishonesty; that is, a man who professes to believe doctrines which he does not believe is an infidel. For instance, if a man tells me that he is a Mohammedan, I am justified in believing that he accepts the teachings and doctrines of Mohammedanism. He may be a foolish man, he may be ignorant and superstitious, but he is not an infidel because he believes what he says he does. But if he does not actually believe the doctrines of Mohammedanism, then he is an infidel; for an infidel is one who makes a false profession of faith. Likewise a Christian who squares his profession with his faith is not an infidel, but a Christian who does not believe in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity is an infidel. A man may believe in a wooden god, and if he tries to be loyal to his wooden god, he cannot be called an infidel. He may be called a foolish, ignorant, superstitious man, but he cannot be called an infidel. On the other hand, a man may say that Jesus is God and that his teachings are infallible, but if he does not act as though he believed it, he is an infidel, because he is unfaithful to the religion which he professes. So a man may be a Unitarian and say that he accepts reason and conscience as ultimate authorities in religion, and so long as his acts are controlled by the dictates of reason and conscience, he is not an infidel; but the moment he professes to be an apostle of reason and acts

as though he were under the dominion of the church, he becomes an infidel. To profess one religion and practice another is to be an infidel.

Now according to this definition there must be a great many infidels in the orthodox churches; in fact it is difficult to find today any real believers in the fundamental doctrines of orthodox Christianity except the very ignorant. Believers of the old type are very rare nowadays. There is a prominent minister in our city, who says in an article recently published in one of our Sunday papers, speaking of a certain kind of liberalism which flourishes in our city: "It holds up before the people the doctrines of 400 years ago as though they were the doctrines still taught from the modern pulpit, when it knows that if it be not too ignorant it lies." This minister tells us that the doctrines of 400 years ago are not the doctrines of today. Yet when I turn to his Prayer Book I find there as the doctrines of his church, these same doctrines of 400 years ago, and when I turn to the service for the ordination of a priest I find that he has promised faithfully to teach these doctrines. Now what am I to think? This clergyman practically enters a plea of "guilty." He says that no one believes in the old doctrines any more. These doctrines, however, are still in the creeds. The ministers swear to uphold them, but they do not, in fact they repudiate them—well, they have become infidels. Besides, if these doctrines once believed have passed away, what assurance have we that the remaining doctrines will not meet the same fate; and how does it happen that the church of God believed in and taught erroneous doctrines for nearly two thousand years? These men have lost their faith and do not know it. Every Sunday they are preaching in their pulpits things which they deny by their actions on Monday. They get on their knees and call themselves "miserable sinners" and say "there is no health in us," but they will not permit any one else to speak of them in this manner. They say that they be-

lieve Jesus was God and that his teachings are infallible. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor," but the church is striving above all else today to abolish poverty and thus rob men of their blessing. Jesus said, "Blessed are the hungry," but these men eat three, four, and five times a day in order to escape this blessing. Jesus said any number of things which these men openly flout with not even a pretense of practicing, and yet they say that the salvation of the world depends upon the acceptance of his teachings. They say that God holds our lives in the hollow of his hand, but if some one dies through the mistake of a physician, whom do they blame, God or the physician? And when a ship goes down at sea, instead of blaming God, they imprison the captain and sue the company for damages. And yet they stand in their pulpits and tell us in solemn tones that this world is in the hands of an allwise and beneficent providence, who so preserves us that without his will not a hair can fall from our heads. These men tell us on Sunday that they believe in prayer, but they live all week as though they did not believe in it. For instance, these clergymen lock their doors at night to protect their property. If they believed that God answered prayer they would not need to lock their doors, they would only need pray for such protection. But experience has taught them that God is not enough, and that prayers without locks are of no avail. Yet every Sunday they stand in their pulpits and declare in solemn ministerial voice what firm believers they are in the power of prayer. They say so, but the locks and keys speak louder than words. The real infidels are in the orthodox Christian pulpits.

Infidelity and Progress

Now in conclusion I want to make a few remarks about those who are commonly regarded as infidels. In spite of all that I have said, we know very well what the commonly accepted meaning of the term infidel is.

It is the name applied to those who dissent from the popular religion; and as I said a moment ago, the reason the church hurls the word infidel, which is supposed to carry with it public contumely, at those who differ from it is merely because of the general dislike for such difference, because of the attempt to keep things uniform, to maintain the *status quo.* But it is evident from what I have said, that thus to accuse and condemn all who reject the popular religion is to erect an arbitrary barrier against intellectual and moral advance, and to put a protective tariff upon orthodoxy to the disadvantage of science and free thought. Every single step of advance in civilization has been made by men who at that time were denounced as infidels or heretics. The church has fought tooth and nail every single step of progress. If the church could have had its way, modern civilization would never have developed and humanity would have been ruined. The history of civilization is the history of a succession of brave heretics and infidels who have denied false dogmas and brought new truth to light. If I had time I should like to tell you about them; but in order to know that the most determined enemy of civilization in the past has been the church, and that the men who promoted progress in the face of its overwhelming opposition were the great infidels and heretics, you only need read the history of civilization as told by such men as Draper, Buckle, Lecky, and White. Be it in geography, in astronomy, in physics, in anatomy, in chemistry, or in biology, for every new discovery made, the discoverer had to suffer the stings of ostracism because of his infidelity. Aye, even the very progress of religion itself has depended upon the rise of heretics and infidels within the fold from time to time, such as the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, Paul, Luther; all of whom were heretics and infidels because they did not believe in and conform to the popular religion. The righteous orthodox people of their time cursed these heroes, reviled them, even tortured,

scourged, or murdered them; and then the children of these righteous orthodox people have adopted the heresies as true and have glorified the dead infidels; and then in turn cursed the new infidel who would lead them a little nearer the light. Copernicus, who first solved the mystery of the solar system, was denounced as an infidel by the Christian church; but today the most orthodox Christians accept his teachings and honor his name. Bruno, who first declared that the stars are suns, was burned at the stake for heresy; but today all Christians believe what he taught. Galileo was threatened with death for teaching views which contradicted the doctrines of the church, was thrown into prison and tortured; but today all Christians acknowledge that Galileo spoke the truth. Darwin and Spencer have been pounded for a generation with the bludgeons of pulpit ignorance and denounced as infidels and atheists, and now all intelligent Christians believe in the doctrine of evolution. The three great founders of this republic, Paine, Franklin, and Jefferson, all infidels in their day, are beginning to be honored. And even the lectures of Bob Ingersoll are at last being read and appreciated by the Christian clergy. In practically all cases it has been demonstrated that the infidels have been right and orthodox religion has been wrong.

The Church Still Backward

Step by step the church has retreated. Time after time, the church has come to accept the truths for the telling of which she persecuted or murdered her teachers. And yet today they continue to shout "Infidel" at the man who takes a step in advance of the commonly accepted ideas. After taking a hundred steps away from old dogmas towards the truths taught by the infidels, orthodoxy still shudders at the request to take one more. After two thousand years of wicked and foolish persecution, orthodoxy remains true to the tradition that any one who differs from it is an infidel. Let me give some

concrete examples of what I mean. Christians once declared that all the millions of human beings outside the Christian church would go to hell and burn forever in fire and brimstone; but they do not like to be reminded of that now. They used to declare that every unbaptized baby would go to hell; but they resent any reference to that folly now. They used to believe in witchcraft and burned thousands of innocent women as witches; but they feel offended if you remind them of that now. They once accepted as history the legends of Adam and Eve, of the Flood, and of the Tower of Babel; but they call them allegories now. They used to believe that the world was made in six days; but now they tell us those days were geological ages. They used to teach that the sun revolved around the earth; but now they accept the conclusions of Copernicus. They used to believe that the pain accompanying child-birth was the proper punishment for women because of the disobedience of Eve, and called those, who prescribed chloroform to relieve the pain, infidels; but now they smile at such doctrines. They used to denounce Darwinism as impius and absurd; but now they are trying to harmonize Christianity and evolution. And why have they given up these absurd things? Simply because there were certain infidels who denounced them as absurd and wicked until they were compelled to surrender them. And today the church continues to teach other doctrines which are just as absurd. They teach that Jesus was God, that his mother was a virgin, that he arose from the dead, that three persons are one, that those who believe in Jesus are saved for eternity, that God can forgive sins, that the natural order can be overcome by miracles, that things may be had by praying; and if any one denies these statements they call him an infidel. But the time is coming when these statements will seem as absurd as the others do now, simply because the so-called infidels of today will continue to expose them under the searchlight of reason and science until even the blind

followers of their blind guides can no longer believe them.

So let me say to you men and women, that civilization is built up of the heresies of men who thought freely and spoke bravely. Those men were called infidels when they were alive; but now they are recognized as the saviours of the world. We only need follow their example, and even though we be called infidels now, the children of our accusers will hail us as the benefactors of the race. The name infidel has been borne by some of the noblest of the human race, let us bear it as did they, with a smile, and with a determination to make our infidelity felt, remembering the lines of James Russell Lowell:

For Humanity sweeps onward: where today the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn.

'Tis as easy to be heroes as to sit the idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our fathers' graves,
Worshipers of light ancestral make the present light a crime;—
Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men behind their time?
Turn those tracks toward Past of Future, that make Plymouth Rock sublime?

They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts,
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the Past's;
But we make their truth our falsehood, thinking that hath made us free,
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments, while our tender spirits flee
The rude grasp of that great Impulse which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain them; we are traitors to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Freedom's new-lit altar-fires;
Shall we make their creed our jailor? Shall we, in our haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets steal the funeral lamps away
To light up the martyr-fagots round the prophets of today?

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her campfires! We ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.